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September 27, 1994

OPPOSE HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES IN EAST TIMOR

Sign letters to President Clinton and U.N. Secretary General

Dear Colleague,

We invite you to cosign the attached letters to President Clinton and United Nations Secretary General Boutros-Ghali regarding the human rights situation in East Timor.

For many years, we have been concerned about the situation in East Timor, the predominantly Roman Catholic former Portuguese colony that was invaded by Indonesia in 1975. Since that time, at least 100,000 of a population of less than 700,000 have perished in East Timor as a result of Indonesia's occupation. International concern over East Timor has increased since November 1991, when Indonesian troops massacred up to 200 unarmed demonstrators at Santa Cruz cemetery in Dili, the capital of East Timor, in full view of western journalists, including a British cameraman whose film appeared on American television.

Our concern was heightened recently over severe human rights violations, including torture, beatings, as well as acts of desecration and harassment toward the Catholic Church in East Timor by Indonesian military and security personnel. These acts took place in an atmosphere of intimidation and coercion and cannot be explained away. All of these facts underscore the need for American representations on human rights and for a peaceful settlement under United Nations auspices.

In November, President Clinton will travel to Indonesia for the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Summit. During the course of this visit, we hope that the President will raise the issue of East Timor with Indonesian President Suharto. In January 1995, there will be the next round of United Nations-sponsored talks between Indonesia and Portugal dealing with the East Timor situation. It is our hope that the UN Secretary General Boutros Ghali will work to intensify these talks to bring about greater results on human rights observance and a peaceful settlement of the conflict. Letters to President Clinton and Boutros Ghali that call for a number of concrete measures could help facilitate these goals and bring this tragedy to an end.

It is very important to register our concern over East Timor at this unique moment. If you would like to cosign these letters to President Clinton and Secretary-General Boutros Ghali, please contact Bob Zachritz at 5-6465.

Sincerely yours,

Tony P. Hall
Member of Congress

Frank Wolf
Member of Congress